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Measuring emotion: The long and short of it

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Verbal self-report measures of emotional response commonly make use of a long lexicon of emotion terms, requiring a large number of responses by consumers and inevitably increasing the potential for boredom and fatigue. The present study aimed to assess the efficacy of a novel approach for reducing the number of consumer responses by comparing results obtained using both a full emotional lexicon and a reduced form.

This study utilised a consumer-led lexicon generated by three focus groups of 5-7 subjects ($n=17$) in response to 10 samples of beer. Three samples were assessed at a time and subjects were asked to describe how their emotional response to any 1 sample was different to the other 2 (triadic elicitation). The focus groups generated 43 emotion terms which were subsequently used by the same 17 subjects to rate the intensity of their emotional response to each of the 10 samples. Linguistic checks and cluster analysis of the responses were employed for the grouping of terms into categories of similar emotions. Nine distinct emotion categories were identified.

Consumers ($n=109$) rated their emotional response to the 10 samples across 4 sessions using both the full form (43 items, 1 line scale for each emotion term) and reduced form (9 items, 1 line scale associated with a list of terms that belong to a given emotion category). In order to counterbalance, 59 consumers completed the full form first and 52 filled out the reduced form first.

It was shown by multiple factor analysis that comparable emotional spaces were generated by full and reduced forms (RV coefficient = 0.791). Nevertheless, analyses revealed noteworthy differences. This presentation will discuss the relative merits of using a reduced form for measuring emotional response to food and beverage products.

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